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MAIN TITLE

"SPONGING FOR A LIVING" /

SUB TITLES

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Photographed off the coast of Andros Island, Bahama Group.

1. The SPONGE is known to all the world for its remarkable absorbing power, so let's imitate the sponge and absorb a few things of interest about this unfamiliar industry.
2. Out there beneath the surfact of the warm tropical sea are the Sponges, clinging grimly to their fond homes as if anticipating this gathering of the Spenge Fisher's Fleet.
3. Like a mother with her breed of little ducklings, are the sail boat and the small dories that operate from her.
4. Glass bottom buckets enable the Spongers to see clearly their progress in loosening the sponge with the long, three pronged, poles used for that purpose.
5. Except in the larval stage the sponge permanently attaches itself to a piece of coral or shell. The average 6 inch sponge is about 4 years old.
6. After a load of sponges has been gathered they are placed on the deck of the main ship and left there until the slimy matter is all drained off.
7. When the fishing is completed the sail boats return to the base of operations and the dead sponges are placed in pens or kraals. Here they are left for about one week to wash.
8. After all the living matter has been removed the sponges are dried, cleansed by hand, sorted according to kinds and arranged in piles.
9. "Spenging for a living is a lonesome old job unless the Spengers are all ashore," said the watchman of the land of sponges.
10. The sponges are now ready for market. The buyers assemble and proceed from pile to pile, bidding on each separately. The highest bidder takes the lot.
11. The buyers then forward the newly purchased supply to their respective packing and warehouses.
12. To remove the irregular and torn parts, with minimum waste, requires the work of expert "clippers."
13. Propagating a sponge on a cement disc. In eighteen months the seed becomes 25 times its original size.
14. Sponges of the same size and quality are baled almost dry under a pressure of from 15 to 60 pounds. Two thirds of the world's supply, in weight, come from America.
15. "Spenging for a living."

(THE END)

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